Docket No. PHFR 000074

IN THE ABSTRACT

Please delete in its entirety and replace with the following:

The present invention relates to a method of processing an input digital video signal so as to provide a modified digital video signal for a motion estimation step. The processing method includes the steps of computing a histogram of luminance or chrominance of original values associated with pixels belonging to a video frame contained in the input digital video signal, analyzing the histogram to provide histogram parameters, and correcting the original pixel values on the basis of the histogram parameters to provide modified pixel values, which yields the modified digital video signal to be used by the motion estimation step. If required, this processing method may also include filtering the modified digital video signal so as to provide a filtered modified digital video signal for the motion estimation step. Such a processing method is adaptive to the content of the input digital video signal and allows the motion estimation step to provide better motion vectors for the purpose of encoding.

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